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35
15th July 1961

Sri N. C. Ghosh M.A.

Calcutta.

To know the Always-So
is to attain illumination.
Vision of non-difference
and non-duality is
Jnana or wisdom.

When there is neither object
nor thought in the mind,
it is meditation.
Meditate and attain Moksha
May you bless go. Sivananda

RELIGIOUS CALENDAR (Sivanandanagar)

AUGUST

- 7 Ekadasi
- 8 Pradosha Puja
- 10/11 Amavasya
- 18 Tulasidas Jayanti
- 22 Ekadasi
- 23 Pradosha Puja
- 25/26 Purnima;
- Rakshabandhan

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The Master Said....

(Sri Swami Sivananda)

Perfection is infinite in its scope. De-
lude not yourself that you have achieved
perfection with a little of proficiency in a
particular aspect.

One measures one's values with the
yardstick of one's limited understanding.
There is so much more beyond the horizon
of mind. There is nothing called the last
word in perfection in the realms of higher
life. Even for the jivanmukta em-
bodiment presupposes a certain degree of
limitation. Why to boast of perfection,
when there is so much to be done to streng-
then the basic foundation?

Respect the laws of nature; life will
be kind to you. The world reacts to you as
per your own attitude and action directed
to it. The world is but a creation of your
own mind. If you think it is bad, bad it
becomes. If you think it is good, good it is.

If you are worldly, the world is a
source of bondage. If you are spiritual,
the world is but an image of God, and a
means of release.

The sun teaches how it bestows the
life-giving rays with denial to none. The
river teaches that its nature is to flow and

meet the ocean, while not denying its
waters to any, deserving or undeserving,
and not minding what one throws into it,
either good or bad.

Love of God should find expression in
love of humanity. Love of humanity
should be spiritualized through love of God.
Expansion is the nature of true love. When
it is exclusive and possessive, even in the
spiritual path, it ceases to be itself.

Spirituality is essentially universal.
A spiritual man is above institutional re-
ligion, though it does not mean that he
ceases to be a follower of the religion in
which he was brought up. The only diffe-
rence is that he now rises above all the
dogmas that divide the religions of the
world, which were set to maintain their
exclusiveness. A spiritual Hindu is really a
better Hindu, a spiritual Christian a better
Christian.

The light is within you. You cannot
find anything which is not already within
you, however much you search for it out-
side. You cannot find understanding, love,
generosity, goodwill and helpfulness from

others, unless you yourself possess them in abundant measure and give them to others.

How can you receive unless you have the heart to give? How can you expect others to be unselfish unless you are selfless? Even in giving or being selfless you have no right to expect, for the very ele-

ment of expectation viciates all the good graces of life.

In giving you are enriched, in denying your little self you bring about greater fulfilment. An epitaph says: "Whatever I gave I have, whatever I spent I had, whatever I had I have lost."

The Spiritual Guide

(Sri Swami Sivananda)

No one can deny the need for guidance in order to achieve proficiency in any aspect of life. From a rudimentary state one progresses to a state of unique achievement. A child begins with addition and multiplication and, later on, becomes a brilliant mathematician. He is able to do so only with the help of a succession of teachers.

Self-effort, of course, does play a dominant role. There is also the question of the presence of the seeds of an innate genius, in need of unfoldment and fruition. Yet, it is within the scope of everyone to attain the highest state in any field, if not today, then tomorrow, if not in this birth, then in the next.

If you want to climb a hill, you have to plod on yourself, but you also need the help of someone who knows the path, and who can lead you to the summit through the safest route. Similar is the role of the guru, the spiritual guide.

Life abounds with numerous teachers. Every object, every occurrence, everything has a lesson to teach. But there is also the basic need for a personal guide, with whom one could forge a sense of belonging, repose absolute trust and confidence, and hold him in high veneration, so as to prepare oneself psychologically to reap maximum benefit from his spiritual guidance.

Expansion is the sign of life. In nature there is nothing static. Everything in this universe is set on a pattern that conditions the evolutionary process, until a cycle of creation is completed and returns to the creator. Human life is a means through which numerous souls in bondage can find release, and return to their original source, the supreme reality.

The life-principle in the mineral matter passes on to the life-form in the various strata of vegetation, mosses, plants and trees, their life-form again evolving into and passing through the animal kingdom, until they are embodied as human beings. The law of karma or action and reaction sets in as soon as the soul finds a human form, for it is only man who is endowed with the faculty of reasoning between right action and wrong action, and, therefore, is held responsible for his fate.

Then onward the momentum of man's individual evolutionary process is in his hands. By leading a good life he can attain a better life, and by leading a bad life he brings upon himself a life of suffering. Since nobody wants to suffer, suffering being contrary to the inherent nature of the soul, man always wants to move forward, consciously or unconsciously, from a state of inadequacy and affliction to a state of fulfilment and eternal bliss.

Experience in life shows that material objects cannot give one a sense of adequacy and fulfilment. Hence spiritual quest is not something which is unnatural to life. The urge for it must generate within everyone, if not today, then tomorrow, if not in this life, then in the next.

It is the spiritual guide who quickens the evolutionary process of man. He opens up before the seeker the avenues through which the realization of the divine can be attained. The guru guides the aspirant, not only on the path of sadhana, but in shaping the pattern of his material life as well.

The relationship between the guru and the disciple is extremely sacred. On one side there are deep understanding, protective care and keen interest for the other's betterment, and on the other side, sincerity of purpose, trust, obedience and assiduous application.

There is something predestined in forging a true relationship between the guru and the disciple. When there is an ardent longing for self-realization, the grace of God automatically leads the disciple to the feet of the right guru. As in the

case of every other relationship, there is also mutuality in this. The response of the guru cannot but be commensurate to the devotion and sincerity of the disciple.

It is, indeed, very rare to find a guru of the highest realization. Even if one is not able to benefit from the direct guidance of such a guru, one should practise the teachings he has given to humanity, while selecting a course of sadhana in the light of one's personal experience. Anyone, who has a greater degree of experience in the spiritual path, can be of help to the neophyte.

The foundational principles of spiritual life are common. In most of the scriptures they are uncontradictory. The ethical base is of primary importance.

Be sincere, truthful, practical and resourceful. The weak and the lazy have no place in the spiritual path. You must build up the strength of character in order to achieve anything in life. Deserve before you desire. Do something practical, substantial. The guru's help will automatically come.

May the grace of God, the supreme guru, be upon you all.

OUR TESTAMENT OF FAITH

(Sri Rabindranath Tagore)

We are of the faith that Truth is one and undivided, though diverse may be the ways which lead us to it. Through separate paths pilgrims from different lands arrive at the same shrine of Truth. This we, verily, know.

Knowledge flows in two streams: from the East and from the West. In their unity is perceived the oneness of Truth that pervades and sustains the entire world. This we avow.

In the realization of this oneness of Truth lies mighty gain, perfect peace and profound good of man. This we truly believe.

Understanding Between India and the West

(Sardar K.M. Panikkar)

[Formerly India's Ambassador to China, Egypt and France, successively]

Most of the misunderstandings, which cloud the discussion on the future relations between the East and the West, arise from an assumption that western civilization is both an ideal and a norm to which the cultures of the East must ultimately conform. From this follows the general idea that what is taking place in India and the other Asian countries is a process of westernization, before which it is assumed that the "traditional cultures" of the East will collapse or be transformed in such a manner as to approximate themselves to the standard cultures of the West.

The fallacies involved in this facile doctrine are too many to be examined in detail here. However, without offering a few observations on this widely prevalent idea, no fruitful discussion is possible on the question of India's relations with the West.

A FALLACY

In the first place, the West itself does not represent a single tradition. Both the traditions of liberal society and of communism originated equally in the West. Nor could it be said that the traditional liberal culture of Western Europe, though it has undoubtedly a broad Christian basis, is not modified by other streams of thought, for example, Jewish, Hellenic and, after the eighteenth century, the teachings of the rationalists.

Secondly, it is often assumed that science is something characteristically western, a fallacy which is considered almost axiomatic: and it is generally believed, especially in Europe, that any eastern country which accepts a scientific outlook be-

comes westernized and, consequently, gives up its alleged non-scientific culture.

A moment's consideration will show how false this assumption is. While it is undeniable that during the last 400 years, revolutionary advances in scientific knowledge have come from a few countries in the West, the idea that science is something for which the West has a monopoly is altogether false and historically untrue.

An outstanding work like Dr. Neeham's *Science in China* should help to disprove this illusion. In regard to India, the following quotation from a learned Syrian cleric of the seventh century should help to show that India was not considered at all times to have been backward in sciences. "I shall not speak," said the Syrian astronomer-monk, Servius Sabokt, writing in 662 A.D., "of the knowledge of the Hindus . . . of their subtle discoveries in the science of astronomy—discoveries even more ingenious than those of the Greeks and Babylonians—of their rational system of mathematics and their methods of calculation, which no words can praise strongly enough—I mean the system of using nine symbols."

NO MONOPOLY OF SCIENCE

It should be evident to any student of history that at different periods the torch of scientific inquiry has been held aloft by different people. If today some countries are more advanced in this respect or claim to be making faster progress, e.g., the Soviet Union or America, it does not follow that Europe has become less scientific in outlook.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Japan industrialized heavily and began to take an active part in scientific development, but she does not seem to have shed her own culture, or her religious beliefs. In fact, the strengthening of the Shinto cult was also one of the aspects of this age. The idea, therefore, that scientific development and industrialization are integrally connected with a westernization of life or the acceptance of the values of the West would seem to have but little validity.

In India, especially the reformation and revival of Hinduism are the most significant feature of the last hundred years. To consider it as an aspect of westernization is without any foundation whatever. True, this reformation was to some extent a response to the western and Christian challenge, but it came from within Hinduism and not from outside.

CASTE SYSTEM

And what were the main characteristics of this reformation? Essentially, it meant a transformation of the social institutions like caste and "untouchability," reform of the legal system under which the Hindu people lived, the sweeping away of superstitious beliefs which had crept into Hinduism.

That these reforms took place in response to the challenge of the West is to a certain extent true; but it is equally true that they had nothing to do with Hinduism as a religion, as may be seen from the fact that at least from the time of the Buddha to that of Mahatma Gandhi, every Hindu reformer had sought to change these institutions.

The caste organization had been considered by many as part of Hindu religion.

That it existed among the Hindus and that many Hindu leaders considered it as being a part of their religion could not be denied. But it was no more a part of Hinduism than, say, slavery was of Christianity (for till the 19th century, every Christian country accepted that as natural in areas outside Europe) or that apartheid and belief in the racial superiority of Europeans are a part of Christianity, because some Christian people accept these ideas. The identification of Hinduism with such doctrines is one of the major causes of misunderstanding.

The idea that because the social institutions of the Hindus have been changed, India is being westernized, is something which would thus appear to be wholly untrue.

LACK OF UNDERSTANDING

It is necessary to emphasize that the misunderstanding between India and the West arises primarily from a lack of understanding of each other's religion. For the last two hundred years, because Hinduism was the religion of a subject race, and the people who ruled them were Christians, it was assumed by the Europeans that Hinduism was an inferior religion, which did not deserve any serious study.

It may also be considered as a counterpart of this tendency that the Hindus, judging Christianity by its political representatives, did not form a high opinion of Christian religion. That Indians, generally speaking, should have looked upon it as aggressive, intolerant and not believing in the brotherhood of man, and should have identified it with mammon worship, *etc.*, is understandable when it was represented in India by an imperialist power. Consequently, the problem of an understanding of each other's religion was practically impos-

sible during the period of European authority in Asia.

Also, it seemed curious to most Hindus how Christianity had come to be identified with Europe. Apart from its origin in Syria, India was one of the earliest countries where the Christian religion had been preached. St. Thomas the Apostle, it is now accepted, landed in India in 51 A.D., and a Christian community has existed in India from that time. John, "Archbishop of India," participated in the Council of Nicea, and the tradition of Christianity has, therefore, been more continuous in India than in most western countries. The identification of Christianity with the West and its institutions, therefore, seemed to most Indians as merely one aspect of the pretension of Europe to have inherited the world.

MISCONCEPTIONS

A basic misunderstanding between India and the West was in these circumstances unavoidable. Though with the disappearance of European authority from Asia, the conditions have altered considerably, some of the basic misconceptions in respect of the religions of the East have survived no doubt in modified forms.

To mention only a few examples: it is generally held among European scholars that Hinduism is mystical and otherworldly and, as it is alleged to encourage the belief that the world is an illusion or maya, it is generally anti-social. Why Hinduism should be considered more mystical than Christianity is difficult to understand. No doubt, during the period of Muslim rule in North India, when the Hindus of the Gangetic Valley had lost their political power, there was an outburst of mysticism, perhaps as a method of escape, but at no time

was Hindu religion predominantly mystical.

Religious experience at certain periods found the best expression in mystical literature, as it did to some extent in mediaeval Christianity. As to Hinduism being life-denying and otherworldly, a criticism normally heard in the West, it is obviously untrue and requires no detailed argument to disprove it. This curious belief has taken root in Europe presumably because retirement from the world is recommended as the ideal for every Hindu, but it is forgotten and needs to be emphasized that such retirement is permitted only after a man has fulfilled his functions in society.

FOUR-FOLD LIFE

Life in society, as a householder, is the obligatory duty of all men and withdrawal from such life before due time (before old age) is not approved even for religious men. In fact, the object of life in Hindu religion is prescribed as dharma (righteousness), artha (activity for economic and social welfare) and kama (life of senses) leading to moksha or liberation. Artha and kama, though they have to be guided by the principles of morality or dharma, are considered essential in the Hindu way of life, and the idea that the Hindus are otherworldly or life-denying is true neither in doctrine nor in practice.

This misconception has arisen from a wrong interpretation of the doctrine of maya which is commonly, but incorrectly, translated as illusion. Following this incorrect translation, the West has assumed that the Hindus look upon the world itself as an illusion, and, therefore, not worth bothering about. Maya is too complicated a doctrine to be defined or discussed here. But it does not mean illusion, and may for our purpose be defined as the veil through

which the ultimate reality is reflected in the minds of unliberated men.

According to Hinduism man is able to realize the ultimate truth only when he is liberated from the effects of maya. The doctrine of maya neither considers the world as an illusion, nor denies the validity of worldly experience. Its translation into European languages as illusion has given birth to this strange idea that the Hindus, as a people, are life-denying and consider the world itself as illusory.

THE GITA IDEAL

Probably originating from the same source is the commonly held belief that Hindu doctrines are anti-social, as at best they only profess to teach the way of individual liberation. The apparent justification for this misconception is the emphasis laid in the mediaeval texts on the doctrine of renunciation and the veneration shown by the Hindus generally to sannyasins who have given up the world. But this doctrine of renunciation is only one aspect of Hinduism.

More important in every way and at all times is the doctrine of karma yogin, that is, of a religious life devoted to social action. The *Bhagavad Gita*, the greatest single text of Hinduism, while recommending sannyasa or renunciation as the final phase of a man's life, emphasizes that all activity should be for loka sangraha or the welfare of the world, and defines the ideal man as a sthitaprajna (rooted in cosmic consciousness)—a person of harmonized life, whose activity, while selfless, should be for the benefit of mankind.

CONCEPTIONS OF GODHEAD

Again, it is held that as Hinduism does not proclaim the fatherhood of God, and the brotherhood of man is a conception foreign to it. True, the fatherhood of God is not preached in Hinduism, because meta-

physical Hinduism considers that Godhead (Nirguna Brahma) cannot be defined, as qualities formulated by human minds cannot be attributed to it.

But theological Hinduism, which accepts the conception of Iswara or personalized Godhead (creator-preserver-dissolver aspects), though not accepting the fatherhood conception, proclaims 'motherhood' as indicating the more perfect love and emphasizing more clearly the brotherhood of man. Jagadamba, as the Mother of the universe, is a conception which brings out both these aspects clearly: and that equally is the reason that when God is conceived in the male form, a Sakti or a female counterpart is invariably added to Him.

So, with motherhood so clearly emphasized, it is obvious that the doctrine "all men are brothers" should be as much a part of Hinduism as of any other religion. That the social institutions of Hinduism did not give effect to this doctrine is true enough, but as pointed out before, the belief in the racial superiority of the white man, prevalent in European countries, could not be understood to mean that the doctrine of the brotherhood of man is not an essential part of Christianity.

CHRISTIAN BELIEFS

If such misunderstanding is widely prevalent among Christians about Hinduism, it is not surprising that among the Hindus also there are fundamental and widespread misunderstandings about Christian belief. To mention a few commonly held ideas would show how difficult it is to bring about a mutual understanding of each other's religion.

For example, it is generally believed by non-Christians—and missionaries in the past, more especially protestants, have often declared so in public—that those who do not accept Christianity are denied the

grace of God and cannot attain salvation: in effort, that intolerance of other religious beliefs is an essential part of Christianity, whose conception of God is thus held by the followers of other paths as being limited.

Since Christianity is still the religion of only a minority of mankind, such a belief, the Hindu theologians hold, would deny the grace of God to the large majority who are outside the fold. The Hindu view that every honest religious belief which satisfies the spiritual need of the individual is entitled to respect, seems to be at variance with the Christian doctrine as commonly understood. The ideas of original sin and redemption are also easily misunderstood among the Hindus. Many other mysteries which the Christians consider as essential parts of their faith are also, as viewed from the point of view of the Hindus, not easily understood.

NO POLARIZATION

With these misunderstandings, which show no sign of diminution, what are the chances of a reconciliation of ideas between India and Europe? The prevalent idea in Europe is that with the rapid changes now taking place in India, the East and the West would come more close to each other, and countries like India would accept the western outlook and modify their institutions. There seems to be hardly any justification for such a view.

No doubt, as everywhere else, with the development of economic life, with changes in the material set-up of lives, with increased facilities for education and other benefits that follow from greater production of wealth, the social and material aspects of life will undergo great and radical changes. But is there any reason to believe that such changes will affect the religion of the Hindus, or their culture?

It appears to me that however radical the changes in India, the people will remain rooted in Indian thought and tradition, basically Hindu, as the tradition of Europe continues to be, in spite of the changes of the last hundred and fifty years, basically Christian. It would be vain to hope that Hinduism, which resisted the militant pressure of Islam for seven hundred years and the challenge of Christianity backed by political power for over a century and a half, will not be able to adjust her social institutions without a breakdown of her religion.

SPIRIT OF SURVIVAL

In fact, Hindu religion has shown an even stronger spirit of survival than Christianity. When one sees that many of the classical areas of historic Christianity, Syria, Egypt and Constantinople and the African littoral, which formed at one time the chief centres of Christianity, have never recovered their Christian tradition, while North India, even after 700 years of Muslim rule, has remained basically Hindu, the inner strength of Hinduism can be realized.

The idea that Hinduism will, therefore, cease to be the major cultural influence in India merely as a result of the social adjustments necessitated by the changed economic conditions of today, or by the impact of scientific thought, both erroneously identified with the West, is only a form of wishful thinking. Consequently, a better understanding between India and the West can only come from a sympathetic understanding of each other's cultural traditions.

SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY

Is there anything in the Indian traditions that stands in the way of progress, or which necessitates a fundamental change in its outlook before it can adjust

itself to new social and economic ideals? Some western thinkers have gone to the extent of arguing that progress itself is a western conception, which has no counterpart in eastern thinking. A distinguished European writer, Barbara Ward, has argued in her McGill lectures this point with considerable skill.

While the idea that human history is a continuous and universal march towards betterment may be one of the beliefs of modern Europe, the idea of progress through human effort is not only not foreign to the Hindu people but is a part of their tradition. That the quality of the age is determined by the action of the peoples, i.e., through human effort (*raja kalasya karanam*) is one of the basic doctrines of Hindu social philosophy.

The question then is whether India can maintain her cultural identity and at the same time adjust herself to the changed conditions of modern life. Has she, in fact, to adapt wholesale the institutions of other civilizations in order to modernize herself? This question, as we have already noted, is based on the assumption that modernization is to be identified with westernization.

MODERNIZATION

The institutions which the West has created are the outcome of certain ideas, doctrines and outlook, acting on its cultural traditions. These ideas are in no way peculiar to the West. A scientific fact or a process of industrialization once discovered, whether it be in Soviet Russia, Western Europe or America, is the inheritance of the entire mankind. The social institutions that develop as a result, or the changes in the material set-up of life that follow, depend naturally on the cultural background on which these new facts operate.

Thus, if India has adopted a policy of large-scale industrialization, or begins to

emphasize a scientific outlook on the problems of life, the institutions that will develop in consequence will not necessarily be those which arose in Europe out of its own cultural background. The experience of China, even in respect of Communism, shows that even within the framework of that theory, the cultural tradition of the Chinese enables it to develop its own institutions independent of what exists in other communist countries.

The position of India is even stronger in this respect. Her civilization is an integrated whole, and the modernization of Hindu social structure which, during the course of the last few centuries had become fossilized, while it may affect the Hindu life in its outward forms, would in fact only help to make it more integrated.

INTEGRATION

The social revolution that is being attempted in India is really a process of integration. Hindu society, divided as it was in the past by castes and sub-castes, and subjected to an archaic legal system, which differed often from one region to another, has now, as part of a social revolution, been integrated into a single community, governed by uniform laws of marriage, succession, etc. Thus, far from leading to dissolution of Indian social traditions, modernization has helped to strengthen the basic doctrines of Hinduism and to integrate its culture as a single civilization.

This is not a new feature in India's *rencontre* with the West. Over a century and a quarter ago, when education through the English language was introduced on a systematic basis, it was fervently believed by its advocates that face to face with European thought and civilization, Hinduism as a religion, and the social institutions which had then been considered as

a part of that religion, would dissolve and disappear.

The writings, not only of missionaries, but of administrators and politicians of that time show clearly that the leaders of western thought were convinced that this would be the result. No doubt, many institutions which had been traditionally associated with Hindus, like caste, early marriage of women, were weakened and finally given up by the Hindus themselves, but the Hindu religion itself only became renovated and strengthened as a result of the impact of western knowledge.

DOMINANT ROLE

We must, therefore, assume that the intellectual and moral outlook of Hinduism will continue to be dominant in India. Any other assumption can only be based on a false sense of superiority and will be against experience and known historic facts. If, as is clear to any unprejudiced observer, the development of social, economic and political institutions will continue to be within the framework of Hindu thought and will reflect the reactions of the modern (falsely identified with western) scientific outlook on Hindu civilization, is there anything in Hinduism itself which stands in the way of such a development?

It used to be argued by the rationalists in Europe that with the discovery of the law of evolution, Christianity would face a serious challenge. Such views have been clearly disproved because religious values are not to be confused with the literal interpretation of texts. This is even more true in respect of Hinduism, which has no revealed scriptures on which Hindu religious doctrines depend. Hindu religion being based on accumulated experience, to which each generation bears witness, even this problem of reconciling scientific knowledge with the texts or teachings does not

arise as a serious issue in regard to Hinduism.

CONSTANT RENOVATION

It is sometimes held that the real difference is between the absolute character of truth as revealed and its relative nature based on experience. Maybe that the revealed truth is absolute, but that is certainly not the Hindu view. The Hindu view is that truth is related to time and, consequently, it is continuously revealed through the experience of saints and sages who have realized God and, more especially, through avatars, i.e., partial or complete incarnations of God.

This is the true doctrine of avatars which is a basic belief of Hinduism. As Krishna says in the *Bhagavad Gita*, "when dharma (eternal truth) becomes clouded or degenerates, I shall take birth to eradicate error and to re-establish truth." It is thus the doctrine of continuous revelation—in relation to time and circumstances—that the Hindus believe in. Perhaps this is not very different from the interpretation of truth through the Church in the Christian tradition.

It is also held that the Christian idea of truth involves an obligation to spread it. The Hindu view undoubtedly is that truth cannot be spread but can be realized by experience, and since all religious feeling is a search for truth, with the consequence that every religion involves at least a partial version of truth, it is more important to encourage people to follow their own search and gain their own realization.

Even if these differences of approach cannot be overcome, an appreciation of each other's position may lead to a better understanding between India and the West.

Meditations

(Sri Swami Sivananda)

1. There is no end to craving. Hence, contentment alone is the best way to happiness.
2. The two important impurities of the mind are attachment and desire.
3. True religion begins where intellectual confusion ends.
4. The purpose of philosophy is investigation into the nature of things and search for the reality.
5. Purity is the mainstay of spiritual life.
6. Where there is no faith, there will always be a lack of understanding.
7. Modesty is the ornament of the great. Servility is not modesty.
8. Arrogance is the result of maladjustment in life.
9. Man's need of God is fundamental. It is of every day's and every moment's importance.
10. The remedy to all sorrows lies in surrender to God.
11. Many of our troubles arise out of misunderstanding and false imagination.
12. Talk less, pray more. Hate less, love more. Take less, give more. Indulge less, restrain more. Sleep less, meditate more. Sit less, serve more. Worry less, smile more.
13. The way of friendship, love and compassion is the way leading to happiness.
14. Give happiness to others and you will be happy.
15. Do not distrust others; with trust and goodwill you can achieve more.
16. Fasting and self-denial help one to control the senses and the mind.
17. If moral and spiritual values are not inculcated from one's earliest years, one will end up as a bundle of complexes or as a misanthrope.
18. Imposition of external discipline cannot help and improve in many cases. A change of heart is needed.
19. The end of wisdom is freedom; the end of culture is perfection; the end of education is character; the end of knowledge is love.
20. That eye alone is real eye, which sees God in everybody.
21. Welcome truth from whatever corner it may come.
22. The veil of Truth or the Eternal is the mundane mind.
23. The soul rises in divine splendour in proportion as the life of senses is decreased.
24. Forbearance is charity, compassion and sacrifice.
25. Forgiveness is an ornament worthy of one and all.
26. Reform yourself first, before you try to reform others.
27. Cultivate silence. Enter silence. God speaks to you in silence. Silence of mind is real silence. Silence conserves energy and bestows abiding peace.
28. Wholehearted and sincere prayer, with unswerving faith in God, will achieve marvels.
29. Love, co-operation and understanding are the corner-stones to world peace.
30. Relax. Remove tension. Abandon fear and worry. Meditate. Learn poise, soul-balance. Poise is yoga. Equanimity is yoga.

Morning Talks With Sivananda

(Sri Sivananda Pat Pearson, Johannesburg)

BALANCE OF MIND

March 31, 1961: A large group of devotees from Bangalore have been spending some days at the ashram. Today they desired to perform pada puja (worship of the guru's feet).

The ceremony was held in the Satsang Hall after Sri Gurudev left the office. The hall was packed and the heat to most of us was unbearable, but Swamiji seemed to be unconcerned; the heat nor the large crowd had any effect upon him. Verses 55-57 of the second chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita* were revealed.

Spiritual vibrations filled the air and penetrated all. The washing of Christ's feet by Mary Magdalen had a new meaning.

SENSE OF HUMOUR

April 1. By everyone of Swamiji's actions, whether serious or humorous, one learns a lesson.

Last evening after the satsang Sri Gurudev invited some devotees to partake of breakfast with him in his kutir (residence) the following morning. The excitement ran high. Many went there for breakfast, but the wise caught on and never appeared; the devotees accepted the fun in good spirit and the proud were displeased. We were sent back with a cup of coffee. It was "April Fool's day." There was no breakfast with Swamiji.

GOVT. OFFICIALS' VISIT

The Committee for the Evaluation of Yogic Practices, appointed by the Government of India, had an interview with Sri Gurudev in his kutir.

It is the function of this Committee to

make investigations of ashrams teaching yoga practices, physical as well as psychic, throughout India. The members of the committee were impressed and said that they would draw up a report of commendation.

INSPIRATION

Sri Gurudev inspires his devotees, whether in far off countries or at his feet. Distance is no barrier. Here is a poem written for Gurudev by Devaki (Constance Heim), of Pretoria, in South Africa:

A flower cannot touch thy beauty,
A garland cannot adorn thy grace,
The sun alone cannot
reflect thy wealth;
The sun, the moon and the stars—
all borrow their light from thee!
In peace and truth
is thy dwelling place.
Pure eternity and immortality
art thou!
Deign to lift thy holy hand
blessing,
That we, thy devotees,
May in truth live for thee!

And this is a song (translated from Sanskrit) from the yearning heart of Swami Jnanananda who, for many years, has been working at the ashram's printing press:

Being grief-stricken for want of thy sight,
the stars, hanging from the vault of the
sky, have become pale and are shedding
on earth tears in the form of dew. I wish
thee, O Yogindra, a glorious morning.

COMIC WIT

April 2: Everything looks so fresh this morning after the shower of rain last night; so, too, do our hearts feel after the shower of grace from Sri Gurudev.

Swamiji said to Christa Burgi, of Bern, Switzerland:

"Do you know what God Liver oil is? You must take it; it is a wonderful tonic."

Yes Swamiji, I know what Cod Liver oil is," Christa replied.

"But what I say is not Cod Liver oil. God Liver oil is Ram, Ram; Om, Om; Jesus, Jesus; and if you take it, when you go to Bern, you will burn away all your impurities," remarked Swamiji.

A GESTURE

Swamiji radiated joy, and, to the surprise of many, played the harmonium whilst he sang a kirtan (a composition of divine names).

Being the eve of Swami Umananda's departure for Switzerland, she said to Sri Gurudev:

"Swamiji, you are so jolly. Is it because I am going back home, to Switzerland?"

"This is for your own joy. Fill your heart with joy, and empty it in Switzerland. Fill it again with the divine name, and bring spiritual inspiration to all.

SWAMIJI'S MAIN CONCERN

April 3: Whilst Swamiji read the letters and signed them, one could feel he was sending spiritual vibrations of peace and comfort to all.

Sri Gurudev is mainly concerned with the spiritual evolution of his devotees. He encourages them to develop their talents, for in so doing it keeps them endeavouring. He is not concerned whether there are organized groups and whether his name is lauded. He knows that whilst his devotees are doing some kind of spiritual work, it keeps them fully occupied with the thought of God and, therefore, helps them to evolve.

Because we cannot understand the greatness of Swamiji and cannot see that he is working from higher realms, there are those of us who are prone to be critical. The human mind is so full of impurities and so conditioned that we form pictures which exist in our imagination.

SPIRITUAL WEALTH

Sri Gurudev looking at Rama (Elaine Rosen, of New York) and knowing of her liking for ice cream, asked:

"Rama, would you like ice cream?"

"Yes, Swamiji, if you can afford it," was Rama's reply.

"I am the wealthiest man in the world," Swamiji answered, and asked a full dish of ice cream to be given to her.

There is no greater wealth than that of one who has attained God-realization.

HE EXPLAINS

Swamiji then asked Rama:

"What is the difference between kama, vasana, and trishna?"

After a while, Sri Gurudev himself answered:

"Kama is basic desire; vasana is latent, subtle desire; and trishna is intense craving. When one imagines the sweetness or flavour of a mango, it is kama; when one actually sees it, it becomes a vasana; and when one eats it, it creates an intense craving (trishna) for more and more. As a remedy for these three, one has to cultivate right aspiration, discriminative understanding and dispassion. One must acquire mastery over mind through steady discipline.

SUBTLE QUESTIONS

Sri Gurudev asked:

What would be your answer if I asked you if you had merged in the Absolute?"

"Silence," he answered himself.

"There is something which says, 'I have come to teach you, but you hate me.' What is it?" asked Swamiji.

"Pain," he replied himself.

"What comes first, the seed or the tree, the hen or the egg?" Sri Gurudev asked Atmaram.

"Swamiji, it is a transcendental question," replied Atmaram. Swamiji agreed.

Nature and Scope of Philosophy

(Dr. T.M.P. Mahadevan, M.A., Ph.D.)

At no time could man do without philosophy. The more tangled his life becomes, the greater is his need for it, whether he is aware of this need or not. We, in India, who have been specializing for some time past in following in the footsteps of the West, fail often to profit by the failures of the West and to catch up with it on the road to recovery and reconstruction. Many of the eminent contemporary western thinkers have now come to realize the important role that philosophy ought to play in the thoughts and affairs of men.

The advance of science and the progress of technology have not given us the peace we so much desire. We seem to be after perfection without purpose. We speed away without a sense of direction. So, it is increasingly being felt by the leaders of thought in the West that the philosophic spirit should be invoked without any loss of time and be made to govern the minds of men, so that they may not disintegrate under the pressure of conflicting pulls and pushes.

Paradoxically, with the widening of the frontiers of knowledge, the clouds of ignorance are thickening and getting to be more and more dense. Even in the same branch of knowledge, what one specialist thinks or says, another is unable to understand. The list of sciences is being expanded with a rapidity that leaves one bewildered and confused. Several educationists

in the West—not all of them technical philosophers—have begun to feel that a basic training in philosophy is essential to introduce some order in the academic chaos of the present day. It will do us good in India if in reordering our educational system we see to it that our students get disciplined in modes of philosophical thinking.

Philosophy has even a greater function to fulfil than to put our minds in proper shape. One of the reasons for the recent decline in the prestige of philosophy, I believe, is that the modern western thinkers have unduly restricted the scope of metaphysics, modelling it after science. The role of philosophy is not that of a curator of scientific curios. Its purpose is not merely to analyze intellectually certain obscure problems and throw some light on them. The supreme gift of philosophy is a vision of the ultimate reality which is at the heart of all things.

Philosophy is darshan or insight into the truth of all things, the ground of all existence. It involves an elevation of life to higher levels of beings, a deepening as well as a widening of one's experience. Many students of modern philosophy may wonder why insistence is laid by the Indian teachers of philosophy on the need for ethical culture and mental poise. The reason for that insistence is to be found in the Indian view of the nature and scope of philosophy.

It is not that there have not been in Indian metaphysical systems revelling in dialectics and running into ramifications of subtle thought. A keen intellect is necessary for the perception of truth and its analysis and application. But the sharpness of intellect alone will not do. Refinement of one's inner nature, sublimation of one's passions, maintenance of mental balance and an outlook of equanimity are all essential for infinite knowledge to dawn.

The truth that the philosopher seeks is not merely intellectual; it is total and integral. It is the general lack of interest in the effort required for gaining a vision of that truth that is responsible for many of the ills of our time. If a new world is to rise, a new awakening is needed. The Indian philosophers have the unique opportunity of helping to bring about this awakening which will reveal the unity of life and the non-duality of spirit.

Essence of Raja Yoga

(Sri Swami Venkatesananda)

Everyone who has a great achievement behind him has practised yoga, consciously or unconsciously. My master, Swami Sivananda, styles even the scientist as a great yogi. The scientist's discoveries are often born of intuition—a flash of truth, or experience brought about by intense concentration of the mind and deep meditation on the chosen problem. The masterpieces of great intellectuals have similarly had their birth in the unconscious practice of yoga. The artist's self-forgetful concentration and contemplation are common knowledge.

The sources of the greatest achievement in any field lie hidden within us. Normally, they are neglected, until some overwhelming interest suddenly makes them available to us for a brief moment—the moment of inspiration and intuitive experience. Yoga enables you to tap this source at will. Hence the practitioner of yoga is alert, intelligent, wise, efficient and powerful all the time, or whenever he wills.

CONCENTRATION

Concentration of the rays of the mind, scattered all over normally, is the key to

this yoga. The concentrated beam should be directed within ourselves. With it we unlock the inner chamber, the treasure-house of knowledge, wisdom and power. In meditation we gather these treasures. In samadhi, or superconscious state, we make them our own. This superconscious state or communion with our own Self is yoga.

Anyone who has attempted to concentrate the mind at will knows that the mind moves faster than anything and successfully eludes all attempts at grasping it. Even if we are able to grasp it, we find it next to impossible to direct it within. Why? Because the will is weak. Swami Sivananda reminds us that the will is weakened by various desires and cravings. It is weakened by wrong thinking, wrong speech and wrong action. In a vicious man, the will is the slave of the impure mind.

'YAMA' OR MORAL LAWS

Hence it is that Patanjali, the author of yoga philosophy, calls upon the student of yoga to practise yama and niyama before embarking on the great voyage to the inner reality. Yama and niyama are the first two rungs in the ladder of yoga.

It is when we ignore these and attempt to jump to the sixth rung or concentration, straightaway, that we break our limbs or run into mental imbalance or face the insurmountable wall of mental distractions.

Yama means principles of morality. Ahimsa or harmlessness, satya or truthfulness, asteya or non-stealing, brahmacharya or continence, and aparigraha or non-acceptance of what belongs to others, constitute the five-fold yama.

Swami Sivananda emphatically declares that ahimsa means positive love towards all beings. But we should not mistake this divine love for the manifestation of lust with which this sublime emotion of love is universally confused. Hence Patanjali's cautious negative description. This love is not infatuation, attachment or lust: it is pure and divine, selfless, cosmic and self-sacrificing. This is a great truth which should not be forgotten.

Satya or truthfulness has been defined as that which is at the same time pleasant and beneficial. Our speech should be truthful, pleasant and beneficial. Where these three criteria are not fulfilled, we should be silent.

Why has non-stealing been given a place of prominence among these great canons? The secret is revealed in the universal scripture, *Bhagavad Gita*. Sri Krishna calls him a thief who appropriates to himself all the gifts of the gods, without sharing them with others. My master lays the greatest emphasis on this. "Give, give, give; share what you have with others" is his clarion call. That is what is alluded to by the word "non-stealing" here.

That continence makes (through sublimation) available to us the wonderful creative power for application to the higher spiritual pursuits in life is a fact admitted

today by not only yogis but also medical men and scientists. The *Upanishads* tell us that God cannot be realized, and meditation cannot be practised, by the man who is weak—physically, mentally, morally and spiritually. Continence is the antidote to this weakness.

Aparigraha or non-acceptance of what belongs to others saves us from our own greediness. It acts as a curb on desires. It generates contentment, the axe which cuts at the root of a sense of want, the enslaving lust for material possessions which only oppress us by their weight and pin us down to this earth.

'NIYAMA' OR RULES OF CONDUCT

Let us proceed to the next rung: niyama. It gives the rules of conduct that should govern our daily life. Saucha or cleanliness is the first. All-round cleanliness is indicated by this. Cleanliness of the surroundings, of the clothes, of the body and of the mind and the heart. 'Cleanliness is next to godliness' is an accepted maxim. The prayerful devotee and the practitioner of yoga know that the mind tends to be pure and powerful in a clean body, in clean surroundings.

Santosha is the next. It is contentment, cheerfulness, acceptance of what falls to our lot, without wry-faced grumbling. This is my master's forte. This enables us to be in a positive frame of mind, always up and doing, striving to grasp and to steady the mind, free from distracting thoughts and desires and their opposite counter-thoughts and frustrations.

Tapas or austerity is the twin-sister of contentment. These two together bring about simple living and high thinking. "Simplify your life; purify your heart; intensify your sadhana and meditation."

These are Swami Sivananda's teachings. We cannot serve God and mammon at the same time. If we multiply our wants, suffer from luxury, our mind will be where our heart is—in our earthly possessions, and it will be almost impossible to practise concentration and meditation. An austere and simple life is indispensable for yoga. In the *Bhagavad Gita*, Sri Krishna has given a revolutionary definition of tapas. He calls for strict discipline of thought, word and deed. The aim is to awaken us from earth-earthiness and to inspire us to keep the ideal of yoga always before us.

Then comes swadhyaya or study of scriptures, whose place in spiritual life cannot be overemphasized. Scriptures and the words of our own preceptor or the guru, are the two eyes with which alone we can see our way and reach our destination.

Finally, Iswarapranidhana or devotion to God, without whose grace no spiritual progress is possible. It is when we recognize this truth and surrender our finite, little ego to Him in prayerful devotion, that this subtle veil is removed, and we are enabled to perceive the divinity that we are in truth.

How many of these virtues have we inherited or cultivated? When we have not even attempted to place our foot on these two rungs of the ladder of yoga, how can our attempts to concentrate our mind and meditate prove fruitful? My compassionate and divine master, Swami Sivananda, has a new formula. He does not want us to wait till we are established in these virtues before attempting the advanced yoga practices. He asks us to strive to concentrate and meditate, at the same time endeavouring to cultivate the virtues. The destination is brought nearer our reach.

ASANA AND PRANAYAMA

The third rung in this ladder is asana: a steady and comfortable posture in which we can sit for a considerable time, a posture which enables us to forget the body without lulling us to sleep. Students of yoga all over the world have found padmasana to be the best (though difficult at first). It is sitting cross-legged, with the back and the head erect.

You are all familiar with the system of yoga exercises known as asanas. They are meant to strengthen the endocrine system and the nerves, to free us from diseases, to make the body light and strong, and to bring about the meditative mood quickly. But the posture for meditation is padmasana (lotus pose).

After the body has thus been brought under control, we proceed to the next step. A little observation will convince us that there is an intimate relation between the breath and the mind. When we are deeply thinking, when the mind is automatically concentrated, our breathing is slow, rhythmic and steady. When we suffer from the temporary madness of anger or lust, when our mind is agitated, we breathe hard, fast and haphazardly. Patanjali, therefore, prescribes control of breath or pranayama as the next step. Seated in padmasana, we should try to regulate the breath—inhalation, retention and exhalation. Do not forget the all-important criterion—slow, rhythmic, deep and steady breathing.

WITHDRAWAL AND CONCENTRATION

Even as this is being done, we shall not fail to notice that the turbulent mind has become tame. There is an experience of peace, a foretaste of the transcendental experience which awaits us. We are ready to take the next step. Sri Krishna asks us

in the *Gita* to withdraw our senses from their objects, just as a tortoise withdraws its limbs into the shell. Our devotion to a personal deity helps us here. With closed eyes we perceive Him within us. Swami Sivananda exhorts us to repeat His name now: our ears listen to the inner "sound." The senses are thus withdrawn from their contact with the external world. The mind longs to taste the peace and the bliss that await it in the inner realm.

If we have ascended these five rungs with purposeful self-effort, we shall find the next one very easy. Dharana or concentration will be almost effortless and effective. The mind of the common man knows only three states: it can either yield to a thousand distractions and roam about in the outer world, the waking state, or the inner world, the dreaming state; or, it can succumb to inertia and ignorance—the deep sleep state.

The diligent practice of yama and niyama curbed our desires and distractions. Asanas and pranayama drove away inertia. Now we are ready to experience the super-conscious state. The rays of the mind are focussed on itself. When they are passed through the lens of concentration or dharana, they burn the cottonwool of ignorance that covers the Self or Godhead in us.

COMMUNION

By the grace of God, we enter His presence. The kingdom of God is within us. We roam that kingdom. We partake of the peace that passeth understanding and the bliss that is perennial and unbroken. We drink at the fountain of immortality. This is dhyana or meditation.

In the Light Divine, our little "I-ness" vanishes. In total self-forgetfulness, we commune with the Lord. The salt-doll

tries to measure the depth of the ocean: it gets dissolved. But it is the ocean of bliss in which we get so dissolved. We have successfully cut ourselves away from the trammels of this world of pain and death. We have broken the cords of ignorance and egotism that bound us to the relentless wheel of transmigration. We have heroically isolated ourselves from the vicious octopus which, with its tentacles of the pairs of opposites such as likes and dislikes, pain and pleasure, honour and dishonour, success and failure, was strangling us. This isolation is known as kaivalya. This is the goal. The yogi who has reached the goal is once for all liberated from pain: he swims in the ocean of bliss, he drinks at the fountain of peace and immortality.

The path is strewn with psychic powers. Dharana-dhyana-samadhi, together called samyama, can be applied to various objects of phenomena. The concentrated beam of light can be focussed on anything: and that thing will reveal its true nature to us. But these powers are distractions and obstacles. The yogi should not be misled or waylaid by these spiritual bandits as the psychic powers are. He should, with intense and unabated zeal, application and adamant will, proceed direct to the goal, which is kaivalya.

This is yoga. This is the most scientific and intelligent path to the consummation of human life. The *Bhagavad Gita* declares that everyone of us is proceeding towards this consummation. That is the process of inevitable evolution. Why not accelerate the progress, the pace of evolution, and instead of wasting our life in the by-lanes of sense-pleasure and heading towards pain, death and disappointment, take the royal road to the goal: Raja Yoga?

Yoga welcomes you to test its doctrines in your own inner laboratory and taste

the delicious fruits it offers you.

May the grace of God and the divine guru enable us to take up the diligent prac-

tice of yoga here and now, and realize its incalculable benefits.

(Courtesy: Radio Ceylon)

Aspire for Spiritual Unfoldment

(A message of Sri Swami Sivananda sent through the Yuvaraj of Porbandar)

Blessed Children of Divinity!

I am immensely happy to send you this message through the Yuvaraj of Porbandar. I had the occasion to receive his dharmapatni (wife), the Yuvarani Saheb Prem Kumari Devi, and was deeply impressed by her devotion and spiritual outlook. She is a very generous lady, and a patron of the Divine Life Society.

I am also aware of the commendable traditions of the royal House of Porbandar, in upholding the cultural and religious heritage of the country, in its association with saintly leaders, and its philanthropic services.

Blessed Yuvaraj Saheb, I wish to draw your attention to the fact that it was a forefather of yours who had drawn the great Swami Vivekananda during his parivrajak (itinerant) days, and their mutual association had benefited them both, when the Swamiji resided for sometime in the State of Porbandar.

GANDHIJI

Porbandar is also doubly blessed in being the birth-place of one of the greatest leaders of our country, Mahatma Gandhi, under whose saintly leadership India attained independence about fourteen years ago.

It is also significant that, true to the ancient traditions of India, Gandhiji's political and temporal leadership was based on the solid foundation of spiritual values and on the moral conviction of the righteousness of the cause he espoused.

I am sure, Yuvaraj Saheb, you would endeavour to live up to the glorious stand-

dard of this rich tradition of our country. After a long period of subjugation, India is once again gradually assuming her worthy position in the comity of nations.

DHARMA

The greatest wealth that India can offer to the world is her eternal spiritual treasure. Dharma has been the life-breath of this country since time immemorial. The dharma, which is bound up within the pages of the scriptures, has only a fossilized value. Dharma must find expression in the lives of the people; it must flower in the heart of man. Only then will the country truly prosper.

Blessed Children of Divinity! You all belong to the common family of God. In unity is strength, in integration the great fulfilment. You are Indians first and last. Let no regional factionalism or caste prejudice mar your consciousness of being common heirs to the rich spiritual heritage of India.

Having achieved this national and spiritual integration, you should aspire even further. The whole universe is your common home. The entire humanity is related to you as closely as your nearest relation. Let this universal attitude be the guiding factor of your life.

STRUCTURE OF LIFE

You have to build the structure of your spiritual life from the base. Have a definite goal. Let your conduct be guided by noble principles. Regenerate the lower nature by the cultivation of virtuous qualities.

In the garden of life, everyone of you should blossom forth as fragrant flowers, each proclaiming the glory of God. All are equal in the eyes of God. His caste is the caste of purity. His religion is the religion of love. His creed is the creed of selfless service and mutual helpfulness.

Therefore, serve, love, give, purify. Repeat the name of God. Sing His glorious qualities of grace, compassion and benedic-

tion. Meditate on His divine form. Commune with Him. Ever aspire to grow into His consciousness. You shall be blessed with God-realization.

May the grace of God protect you all. I wish the Yuvaraj Saheb, Prem Kumari Devi and the whole world at large health, long life, vidya, tushti, pushti, divine aishwarya and kaivalya moksha. Hari Om Tat Sat.

Vivekachudamani

(Sri Swami Narayananda)

[Continued from the previous issue]

अयमात्मा नित्यसिद्धः प्रमाणे सति भासते ।

न देशं नापि वा कालं न शुद्धिं वाप्यपेक्षते ॥३१॥

531. This self or Atman, which is ever perfect, manifests itself the moment one has the right means of knowledge. It is not subject to time, place or any (external) purificatory process for its manifestation.

Commentary: The word used in the verse for "manifestation" is "shine," which means "revealing" itself before the "eye" of intuition. The various kinds of empirical knowledge are not adequate for the perception of the absolute reality. Intuition, attained through deep meditation and other forms of sadhana, is the only right means for the knowledge of the Self, though one could come nearer to the reality by widening the horizons of empirical knowledge, with a sincere aspiration to understand the laws of the universe. For the realization of the Self, which is within, there is no particular time or holy place of any ritualistic process of purification. The heart has to be purified, the modifications of the mind stilled, desires annihilated and attachments eschewed.

देवदत्तोऽहमित्येतद्विज्ञानं निरपेक्षम् ।

तद्वद्ब्रह्मविदोऽप्यस्य ब्रह्माहमिति वेदनम् ॥३२॥

532. "I am Devadatta." This is an independent knowledge. Similar is the case with the knowers of the Truth, when one realizes "I am Brahman."

Commentary: The individual known by the name "Devadatta" need not have to go to others to verify whether he is Devadatta or not. It is a sort of knowledge which already exists in him since childhood, and he does not need any proof for his conviction, for he knows that he is Devadatta. Similarly, one need not have to go in for any external proof that one exists. We exist because there is a reality in us that exists. We are all parts of the supreme reality, identical in our ultimate nature, but veiled by the individuality of our samskaras, the mental being, the sum-total of karmas. When this veil is removed through the attainment of self-knowledge, we are no longer bound, or subject to birth and death, but return to our source, the absolute reality.

भानुनेव जगत्सर्वं भासते यस्य तेजसा ।

अनात्मकमसत्तुच्छं किं नु तस्यादभारकम् ॥३३॥

533. Like the sun, by whose lustre the whole universe is illumined, how can, indeed, this world, which is unreal, insignificant, be in a position to illumine itself?

Commentary: The Brahman is compared to the sun, through the light of which its planets shine. The world cannot shine by itself, because it has no light of its own, but borrows the light from the sun. The world lives and moves, because the sun sustains it through the solar light and re-

gulates its movement through the gravitational pull. Similarly, it is the supreme consciousness which gives energy to matter, sight to the eyes, hearing to the ears, understanding to the mind. You exist, not because you have a body and mind, but because of the soul which gives light to them. The body and mind or the physical world by themselves will not be able to exist without the permeation of the supreme consciousness.

(To be continued)

Essence of 'Brahma Sutrās'

(Sri K.S. Ramaswami Sastri)

[Continued from the previous issue]

Adhikarana nine (sutras 39 to 42) : The *Pancharatra Agamas* (scriptures of the Saivites) refer to the creation of jivas or individual souls. That is wrong. They say that from Vasudeva (supreme soul) comes sankarshana (individual soul), from which comes pradyumna (mind), and from which comes aniruddha (ego-principle).

Every created thing must die. Nor can the mind, which is an instrument, come from jiva who is the doer. If you say that there is no origination of the jiva, but that the jiva is controlled by sankarshana, I have no objection to such a view. But even then the *Pancharatra* is unacceptable, because it says that Vasudeva is the creator and that the symbols of sankha (conch) and chakra (discus) are necessary. -

CHAPTER TWO, SECTION THREE

Adhikarana one (sutras one to seven) : After refuting the opposing systems, the sutrakara (aphorist) considers a few miscellaneous objections in the remainder of the chapter. Akasa (etheric space) was

created by God, and is an effect. Sutras three and four are Poorvapaksha sutras and sutras five to seven are Siddhanta sutras (i.e., pertaining to two philosophical systems). The Veda says: *Atmana akashah sambhuta*.

Adhikarana two (sutra eight) : In the same way, the element, air, is an effect.

Adhikarana three (sutra nine) : Sat or Truth exists always. Something cannot come out of nothing. The *Sruti* says: *Sadeva somyedamagra asit ekamevadvitiyam; kathamasatah sajjayeta*.

Adhikarana four (sutras 10 to 14) : In the same way, the rest of the five elements, fire, water and earth, are effects.

Adhikarana five (sutras 15 and 16) : The text: *Etasmajjayate prano manah sarvendriyani cha; kham vayurjyotir apah prithivi vishvasya dharini*, does not refer to the order of evolution, but says that God is the source of all. Mind, life and senses are included in their causes, i.e., the elements.

(To be continued)

Ashram News and Notes

YOGA-VEDANTA FOREST ACADEMY

The thirteenth anniversary of the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy was observed at Sivanandanagar on July 3, under the presidentship of its founder, Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj.

Since its establishment in July 1948, the Academy has trained thousands of students, Indian and foreign, in the various aspects of yoga. Its senior professors have visited practically all the six continents, to propagate the knowledge of yoga and vedanta.

At present some of them are serving as yoga missionaries (not for the sake of proselytizing the people of other faiths, but for the dissemination of the fundamental principles of spiritual life) in South America, North America and South Africa.

PART OF SIVANANDASHRAM

The Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy is essentially a part of Sivanandashram, the headquarters of the Divine Life Society, and the latter's activities concurrently constitute the programme of the former.

Regular classes are held on the theoretical and practical aspects of yoga. No strict curriculum is in force, and all visitors to Sivanandashram automatically are entitled to, and do, take part in the programme of the Academy.

DAILY ROUTINE

A meditation class is held in the early morning, and, from time to time, instructions on the practice of meditation are given for the benefit of the new participants. The devotee-students join the morning and evening worships at the Viswanath Mandir.

A class on hatha yoga exercises is

held daily in the morning, after the meditation class. Special instructions are also given by the instructor-in-charge to those who wish to specialize in hatha yoga, in the evening, on request.

SUBJECTS

In the afternoon two theoretical classes are held covering different subjects which are rotated periodically. *Yogavasishtha*, *Bhagavadgita*, Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras*, the principal *Upanishads*, *Vivekachudamani*, *Panchadasi* and *Narada Bhakti Sutras* are among the texts.

The afternoon classes are supplemented by lectures on any one of these or other topics during the night satsang, usually including two of them. The satsang, which is held in the immediate presence of Sri Swami Sivanandaji, also provides the opportunity for the devotees to take part in kirtan and bhajan.

The Academy has also a music department which holds daily classes in classical music, vocal and instrumental, besides training students in the recitation of Sanskrit prayers and singing kirtan and bhajan.

MORNING SATSANG

In the morning hours, after the hatha yoga class, the visitors to Sivanandashram assemble in the main office of the Divine Life Society for darshan of Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, where a satsang is combined with office work. Passages from the works of Swamiji are read, prayers recited and bhajans sung. Swamiji answers to the questions of the spiritual aspirants, while simultaneously attending to his office work. Lectures are also generally given.

FIELD FOR KARMA YOGA

Sivanandashram provides an ideal field for karma yoga for such aspirants who are inclined to active work. Here they can assist in the work of the various departments—secretarial, nursing and otherwise.

Visiting doctors, among them specialists in medicine and surgery, help in treating patients at the Ashram's two hospitals—for eye diseases and general diseases. Medical and surgical camps are also held occasionally.

The Academy has a unit for teaching the three R's to local children, which is known as Sivananda Primary School. Poor students are maintained and given free education by the Ashram even after they complete their primary course, when they are sent to the Bharat Mandir Collegiate School at Rishikesh town.

NO FIXED DURATION OF STUDY

As already said there is no hard and fast rule for the Academy. To complete a subject it usually takes a few months, after which the teaching of the same texts is begun afresh. Likewise, various subjects are simultaneously rotated. When a student stays for a sufficient length of time, he is able to acquire a measure of knowledge pertaining to quite a few texts, or yoga exercises.

Special classes are held by senior professors such as Swami Krishnananda and Swami Jyotirmayananda, according to the time available at their disposal. Students are thus able to make up for the part of the routine subjects they might have missed at the time of joining the Academy, or take up special subjects according to their liking.

PARTICULARS OF ATTENDANCE

Admission of students is subject to the availability of residential accommodation

at Sivanandashram. If the students could make arrangements for their boarding and lodging at Rishikesh town, a little more than a mile from here, they are always welcome to join all the classes of the Academy, without any obligation.

There is no tuition fee as such or lodging and boarding charges. But students usually contribute what they consider appropriate lodging and boarding expenses in the form of donation, and sometimes even more.

'JNANA YAJNA'

Since the teaching at the Academy is done as a jnana yajna (sacrifice of knowledge), those who study at the Academy are welcome to print any of the works of Sri Swami Sivananda in their names at the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy Press, or contribute to the jnana yajna fund according to their means.

The Academy's weekly journal, containing mostly the teachings of Sri Swami Sivananda, is *Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy Weekly* (annual subscription: Rs. 6.50).

Visiting lecturers, among them eminent scholars from Indian and foreign universities, give discourses when they visit the Ashram.

ANNUAL REPORT

The thirteenth annual report of the Academy was read, on July 3, at a function held in commemoration of its anniversary.

During the period from July 1960 to June 1961, a total of 190 students received education in the various aspects of Yoga, theoretical and practical, while over 600 attended the classes held by the Academy during their short visits to Sivanandashram, extending not less than two weeks. A total of 79 foreign students were among the above two groups.

The Academy published about two dozen works of Sri Swami Sivananda, including reprints and new redactions, as also three books by others, and six Hindi translations of Swamiji's works. It also brought out a few Tamil editions.

It may be recalled that during the last year thousands of books on yoga, vedanta and other spiritual topics, most of them publications of the Academy, were distributed free of cost all over the world by the founder, Sri Swami Sivananda. These

were valued at Rs. 1,26,656.

The teaching programme of the Academy is led by Swami Jyotirmayananda who is also mainly responsible for giving private lessons.

All students have the benefit of receiving direct spiritual guidance from Sri Swami Sivananda.

All enquiries about the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy should be addressed to the Secretary, Divine Life Society, P.O. Sivanandanagar, via Rishikesh, U.P.

OUR LATEST PUBLICATIONS

ALL ABOUT HINDUISM (revised second edition): It is one of the best works of Sri Swami Sivananda, and gives a masterly exposition of the epitome of this great religion. Hindu dharma, its history, scriptures, ethics, religious ceremonies, philosophical systems, yogas and sects have all been dealt with in a lucid, comprehensive manner. (Rs. 5.00)

CORRESPONDENCE COURSE IN YOGA: This latest work of Sri Swami Sivananda presents

a sweeping exposition of the various forms of practical yoga sadhana, covering such topics as "Jāpa," "ABC of Yoga," "Karma Yoga," "Physical Culture," "Self-Culture," "Meditation," "Divine Life," and so on. This book should serve as a practical guide to all students of yoga. (Rs. 5.00)

The above-mentioned works are available from the Sivananda Publication League, P.O. Sivanandanagar, via Rishikesh, U.P.

SOUTH AFRICAN EDITIONS

SURE WAYS OF SUCCESS IN LIFE AND GOD-REALIZATION is one of the first South African editions of Sri Swami Sivananda's works. Dealing on a variety of subjects and covering the full range of self-culture, it is easily one of the most beneficial works that a reader can hope to acquire.

SAINTS AND SAGES, Volume One, gives an inspiring collection of the life-sketches and teachings of saints and seers, ranging from the Buddha and Jesus Christ to Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi.

STREE DHARMA contains instructions on the duties of women, their culture and education (depicted in the light of India's spiritual tradition), household cookery and remedies, and in-

cludes some life-sketches of women saints.

PHILOSOPHY OF SHAKTI WORSHIP is an adaptation of Swami Chidananda's *God As Mother*, which beautifully and convincingly expounds a fascinating subject through a deeply devotional and yet rational outlook.

ESSENCE OF RAMAYANA: Swami Sivananda presents, in his inimitable style, this great epic which has portrayed the ideal of dharma and inspired billions of people through millenia.

The above-mentioned South African editions, and also a few more, are available from the South African Divine Life Society, 38 First Avenue, Durban, South Africa. Two monthly periodicals, *Path to God-realization* and *Divine Life for Children*, are also published from there.

RELIGIOUS CALENDAR

(Sivanandanagar: September 1961 to March 1962)

SEPTEMBER, 1961

- 1 Sri Krishna Jayanti;
Sri Jnaneshwar Jayanti
- 5 Ekadasi
- 7 Pradosha Puja
- 8 75th Birthday of
Sri Swami Sivananda
- 9/10 Amavasya
- 14 Sri Ganesha Chaturthi
- 15 Sri Rishi Panchami
- 18 Sri Radhashtami
- 20 Ekadasi
- 22 Pradosha Puja
- 23 Sri Ananta Chaturdasi
- 24 Purnima;
Sri Appayya Dikshita Jayanti
- 25 Mahalaya Paksha begins.

OCTOBER

- 5 Ekadasi
- 7 Pradosha Puja
- 9 Mahalaya (Pitri) Amavasya
- 10 Navaratri Puja begins
- 16 Sri Sarasvati Avahana
- 17/18 Navaratri Puja ends
- 19 Vijaya Dasami
- 20 Ekadasi
- 21 Pradosha Puja
- 23 Purnima

NOVEMBER

- 1 All-Saints' Day
- 2 All-Souls' Day
- 4 Ekadasi
- 5 Pradosha Puja
- 7/8 Dipavali Amavasya;
Sri Lakshmi Puja
- 9 Govardhana Puja; Gopuja
- 14 Sri Skanda-Shashthi
- 17 Sri Yajnavalkya Jayanti
- 18 Ekadasi
- 19 Sri Tulasi Puja; Chaturmasya ends
- 20 Pradosha Puja
- 21 Sri Vaikuntha Chaturdasi
- 21/22 Purnima;

Sri Guru Nanak Jayanti

DECEMBER

- 3 Ekadasi; 18th Anniversay of
Akhand Mahamantra Kirtan at
Sivanandanagar
- 5 Pradosha Puja
- 7 Amavasya
- 18 Sri Vaikuntha Ekadasi;
Sri Bhagavadgita Jayanti
- 19 Pradosha Puja
- 21 Purnima; Sri Dattatreya Jayanti
- 25 Christmas-Day
- 31 18th Anniversary of Pratishtha
Mahotsava of Sri Vishwanath
Mandir at Sivanandanagar

JANUARY, 1962

- 2 Ekadasi
- 4 Pradosha Puja
- 6 Amavasya
- 14 Makarasankranti;
Uttarayana Punyakala
- 16 Ekadasi
- 18 Pradosha Puja
- 20 Purnima

FEBRUARY

- 1 Ekadasi
- 2 Pradosha Puja
- 4 Amavasya
- 9 Vasanta Panchami
- 11 Ratha Saptami
- 15 Ekadasi
- 16 Pradosha Puja
- 18/19 Purnima
- 28 Punyatithi of Samartha Ramadas

MARCH

- 2 Ekadasi
- 4 Pradosha Puja; Sri Mahasivaratri
- 6 Amavasya
- 16 Ekadasi
- 18 Pradosha Puja
- 20/21 Purnima; Holi;
Sri Gauranga Jayanti

KRISHNA JANMASHTAMI

The Krishna Janmashtami (birthday of Sri Krishna) will be celebrated at Sivanandanagar, Rishikesh, on September 1. There will be a special worship at the Viswanath Mandir, wherein also is installed the idol of Sri Krishna, with laksharchana, mahabhisheka, akhanda kirtan of the "Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya" mantra, recitation of the entire *Bhagavadgita* and appropriate passages from the *Bhagavata*, and concluding arati at midnight. During the day a havanam for peace and welfare in the world will be performed.

All devotees are welcome to participate in the Krishna Janmashtami celebration with prior intimation to the Secretary, Divine Life Society. Worship will also be offered on behalf of those who are unable to participate personally, on request to the Manager, Viswanath Mandir, P.O. Sivanandanagar, via Rishikesh, U.P.

SOME SIVANANDA PUBLICATIONS NOW AVAILABLE

All About Hinduism	Rs. 5.00	Stree Dharma	Re. 1.50
Mind, Its Mysteries and Control	.. 6.00	Ambrosia	.. 2.00
Vedanta in Daily Life	.. 5.00	Sivanandashram Bhajanavali	.. 1.00
Inspiring Talks of Sivananda	.. 5.00	Yoga Lectures (By Swami Chidananda)	.. 10.00
Divine Life for Children	.. 2.50	Vedanta for Beginners	.. 1.50
Analects of Sivananda	.. 2.00	Lord Krishna, His Lilas and Teachings	.. 4.00
Bhagavadgita (With Notes & Commentaries)	10.00	Yoga for the West	.. 1.00
Dhyana Yoga	.. 3.00	World Peace	.. 4.00
Amrita Gita	.. 1.00	Practice of Ayurveda	.. 5.00
Easy Steps to Yoga	.. 3.00	Practice of Brahmacharya	.. 3.50
Essence of Teachings	.. 2.00	Fourteen Lessons on Raja Yoga	.. 2.50
Gurudev Sivananda (By Venkatesananda)	3.00	Essence of All Gitas (Sarvagitasara)	.. 5.00
First Aid to the Injured	.. 5.00	Sivananda Smriti	.. 3.00
Essence of Bhakti Yoga	.. 3.00	Philosophy and Teachings	.. 3.00
Advice to Women	.. 1.00		

The Manager, Sivananda Publication League, P.O. Sivanandanagar, via Rishikesh, U.P.

CONSTRUCTION OF 'KUTIR' AT SIVANANDANAGAR

From the nucleus of a few small buildings, wherein the Divine Life Society was established by His Holiness Sri Swami Sivananda 25 years ago, Sivanandanagar has now grown into a world-famous, dynamic centre of spiritual activities with numerous departments and residential quarters where seekers of Truth engage themselves in *sadhana* and service under the guidance of Sri Swamiji. Many devotees, who spend their holidays at Sivanandanagar and some of whom have chosen to stay here permanently, have built residential quarters in their names or in memory of their relations. A single, medium-size room costs Rs. 2,500 to construct, which is done under the supervision of the Ashram's management. Those who wish to build rooms in their names may please ask for the particulars from the Secretary, Divine Life Society.